provided with a protective or decorative laminar structure", obtained by the process for producing the same as claimed in the claim it depends upon.

Claims 1-4, 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by STROMBERG (U.S. Pat. 3,674,671). The same claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over STROMBERG in view of Applicants' admission. Claims 1-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MATSUO (U.S. Pat. 5,190,830) in view of Applicants' admission. Claims 1, 3-4 and 8-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over RICHARDSON (U.S. Pat. 5,203,975) in view of Applicants' admission. Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over STROMBERG alone or modified with Applicants' admission and further in view of either MATSUO or RICHARDSON. The rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

The present invention is drawn to a process for coating three-dimensional substrates. Usually, multi-layer coatings, for example in automotive applications, are obtained by applying the primer layer electrophoretically, and then applying the second and the top coat by spraying them on top of electrophoretically applied primer layer. This conventional process is complicated and presents problems of environmental pollution mainly caused by the spray application. The instant application provides for a process which allows to avoid spray application altogether. In the method according to the invention, a first primer layer and a second layer, are applied without spray application and the final top coat is applied in the form of a plastic film after stoving the first and the second layer. The plastic film is part of the total multi-layer coating and they provide a protective effect of the top coat. The plastic films can be colored, however, preferably, they are transparent films acting like clear coats, usually applied by spray coating.

None of the references cited by the Examiner disclose a method for preparation a multi-layer coating using an unpigmented or pigmented plastic film as the last layer. To cure the shortcomings of the cited references, the Examiner turns to the disclosure of the present specification (especially lines 25 to 34 on page 1) where it is stated that especially in Germany, taxi cars are sometimes covered by plastic films. However, the claimed invention could not be obtained by combining teachings of the references with a process of covering cars with a plastic coat as discussed in the present specification. As discussed in the specification, covering of a taxi with a plastic film involves application of a plastic film on top of the finished coating multi-layer structure. In such cases a multi-layer coating, that is usually applied by spraying a second coat and clear top coat on an electrophoretically-primed automotive body. The plastic film is not applied on the second electrophoretically applied coat, but on top of the third clear coat. In the present invention, however, the plastic film is an essential part of the multi-layer structure and is applied on the second coat. The claimed method is not suggested by the teachings of either of the cited references alone, in combination, or in view of applicants' disclosure and the claimed invention would not have been obvious.

Since all rejections have been addressed and overcome, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is courteously solicited. If any questions remain, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____

Kendrew H. Colton
Reg. No. 30,368
Tel. No. (202) 861-3606
Fax No. (202) 822-0944

1100 New York Avenue, NW
Ninth Floor, East Tower
Washington, DC 20005-3918
(202) 861-3000